

- a. Israel went to Egypt about 1850 BC..give or take a few years. They apparently arrived during the rule of the Hyksos kings in Egypt and that is an important historical note. The Hyksos peoples had slowly emigrated to Egypt and eventually obtained enough power to claim the throne..a fact that may explain Pharaoh's willingness to so quickly trust Joseph in an authority role.
- b. The word to Abraham in Genesis 15 said that his people would be in a land "not their own" for four generations..four hundred years. It is certainly a round number but Exodus 12:40 tells us the stay was 430 years. The Septuagint makes this 430 years in Egypt and Canaan and, with the data of Galatians 3:16-17, this would mean the stay in Egypt was somewhat less but still approximate. But I think the Galatians passage refers to the beginning of the promise and so I think the 400 years refers to life in Egypt.
- c. The 18th dynasty of Egyptian kings arose about 1560 under the leadership of Sekenenre who led a revolt and overthrew the Hyksos kings. He died in the conflict (his mummy has been known for a long time) and he was Kamose who ruled briefly and was succeeded by Ahmose who ruled to 1546. The impression of many scholars is that this was the king who did not know Joseph (Exodus 1:8) meaning that he did not recognize Joseph. Israel had, by then, been in Egypt about 300 years and this means that the period of oppression lasted about 100 years. If this is close to accurate it would put the actual Exodus in the days of Thutmose III who ruled from 1468-1436. You can see that it is not easy to be exact on this but the approximations are good enough for our general understanding.
- d. It would be apparent then that the oppression brought to the Hebrew peoples would be the sort to prevent them from becoming powerful enough to take over the land as the Hyksos had done earlier. The persecutions were designed to be preventive on that line and the history of Egypt helps us to understand why the monarchy feared the growing Hebrew population.